

REMARKS

The limitations of original claim 4 have been incorporated into claim 1. Claim 4 has been canceled.

Claims 1-3 and 5-12 are pending in the application. Claims 6-12 are withdrawn due to a restriction requirement. Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claim 5 is objected to.

Restriction Requirement: The Examiner has taken the position that claims 1-5 (Invention I) are drawn to an article classified in Class 428, subclass 422. Claims 6-12 (Invention II) are said to be drawn to a process classified in Class 427, subclass 385.5. The examiner states that the product as claimed may be made by a materially different process.

In a telephone conversation with the Examiner on June 9, 2004, Applicants' agent made a provisional election with traverse to prosecute the product claims 1-5 (Invention I). Applicants hereby affirm this provisional election.

Applicants' traversal of the restriction requirement is based on their belief that the materially different processes suggested by the examiner could not be used to make the claimed product. First, the perfluoroelastomer article must be cured before application of the coating. Perfluoroelastomer articles are known to shrink during curing. Such shrinking would likely cause the durable coating to undesirably separate or tear from the surface of the perfluoroelastomer article. Also, perfluoroelastomers are known to outgas steam and byproducts of the crosslinking reaction during curing. Such outgassing would probably cause defects in the coating film. Second, Applicants are unaware of a true solvent for both ingredients (i.e. the polysiloxane mixture and the blocked isocyanate) of the coating composition. Thus, the coating composition must necessarily be applied to the cured perfluoroelastomer article as a dispersion rather than a solution.

In the event that the restriction requirement is maintained in this application and nonelected process claims are withdrawn from consideration, Applicants request treatment of nonelected process claims as set forth in Official Gazette Notice published at 1184 O.G. 86 on March 26, 1996 (MPEP 821.04). Upon a determination that a product claim is allowable, Applicants request rejoinder of nonelected process claims and examination of such claims on the merits in the above-referenced application.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 103(a): Applicants have amended claim 1 to contain the limitations of original claim 4. It is believed that this amendment overcomes the rejections and the objection to claim 5.

In view of the above amendments, Applicant believes that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and such favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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